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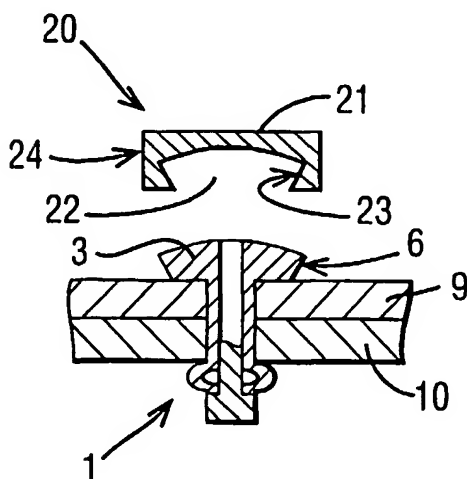
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ning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*

(54) Title: **BLIND RIVET**



(57) **Abstract:** There is described an expanding blind rivet assembly having a flange (3) provided with an undercut surface facing the rivet shank. A resilient cap (20) is formed with a cavity (22) having an opening surrounded by an undercut surface (23) within the cavity, so that the cap may be snap-engaged over the flange of the rivet after setting. The cap provides abrasion and corrosion protection for the flange. The cap (20) may also be provided with securing means for securing a further component to the cap (20).

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Blind Rivet

The present invention relates to fastenings for sheet materials, and is particularly concerned with blind rivet fastenings.

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A conventional blind rivet fastening has a tubular shank with an external flange at one end, and a stem extending through the shank. A first end of the stem protrudes from the flanged end of the shank, and a second end of the stem has a head whose outer diameter corresponds to the outer diameter of the shank, and which abuts the end of the shank remote from the flange. To join two sheets of material together with the rivet, aligned holes with a diameter corresponding to the external diameter of the shank are formed in the sheets, and the shank is inserted through the aligned holes until the flange rests on one of the sheets of material. Holding the flange of the shank in this position, a tensile force is applied to the stem so that the head of the stem applies compression to the tubular shank. Depending on the geometry of the head and the shank, the head may be pulled into the shank while the wall of the shank is deformed outwardly to a greater diameter, or the head may remain at the end of the shank and the wall of the shank may buckle outwards. Tensile force is applied to the stem until, at a predetermined maximum force, the stem breaks off. The head of the stem is either retained within the shank, or may fall away after the stem breaks.

Blind rivets of the types described above are widely used in industry for joining components in sheet metal fabrications. Conventionally, if further components have to be fixed to a sheet metal fabrication, then additional fasteners are required to secure such components. The provision of additional fasteners adds expense to the manufacture of the fabrication, in that not only are additional components required, but additional labour is necessary for attaching the components to the assembly.

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An objective of the present invention is to reduce the cost of producing sheet metal fabrications, by reducing the need for additional placement of fasteners to secure secondary components to the assembly.

- 5 A further objective of the present invention is to provide a means of concealing and protecting the exposed heads of blind rivets after setting.

According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a blind rivet assembly comprising a tubular shank having an external flange at one
10 end, a stem extending through the shank and having a head abutting the end of the shank remote from the flange, characterised in that the flange is provided with a peripheral undercut surface facing towards the shank.

A second aspect of the present invention provides a method of mounting a
15 second component to a blind rivet after setting, the method comprising: providing a blind rivet having a tubular shank with an external flange and a peripheral undercut surface on the flange, setting the rivet so that the undercut surface of the flange faces towards a surface of the material in which the rivet is set, providing an undercut cavity in a second component
20 into which the flange of the rivet is receivable and which includes an undercut surface engageable with the undercut surface of the flange, and snap-engaging the cavity of the second component over the flange of the rivet.

The second component may be a simple protective cap to cover the flange,
25 or may be a functional component such as a cable clamp, a wire tie, or other structure for retaining further parts to the riveted assembly.

Embodiments of the invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

- 30 Figures 1 to 4 are sectional side elevations of a first rivet assembly of the present invention, showing the setting sequence for the rivet assembly;

Figure 5 is a sectional side elevation showing a cap for fitting to the rivet flange;

- 5 Figure 6 and 7 are sectional and perspective views, respectively, of a pipe clamp integrally moulded with the rivet cap;

Figure 8 is a perspective view showing two rivet flanges used to retain an elongated component;

10

Figures 9 and 10 are sectional and perspective views, respectively, of a rivet with a tamper-evident cap;

- 15 Figures 11 and 12 are sectional and perspective views, respectively, of a cable tie integrally moulded with the rivet cap; and

Figures 13 and 14 are sectional and perspective views, respectively, of a rivet with a vented cap;

- 20 Figure 15 is a sectional view, similar to Figure 1, of a second rivet assembly;

Figure 16 is a sectional view of a third rivet assembly according to the invention;

- 25 Figure 17 shows a sectional view of a fourth rivet assembly according to the invention;

Figure 18 is a view of the rivet of Figure 17 set and with a cap applied.

- 30 Referring now to the drawings, figures 1 to 4 show the setting sequence for the rivet. The rivet 1 comprises a tubular shank 2 at the upper end of which

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(as shown in the Figures) is a radially outwardly extending flange 3. The upper surface 4 of the flange 3 is domed, and the undersurface 5 of the flange 3 is planar and perpendicular to the tubular shank 2. The outer peripheral surface 6 of the flange 3 is tapered inwardly and downwardly in this embodiment, to provide a conical surface tapering towards the lower end of the rivet 1. A stem 7 extends through the tubular shank 2 and protrudes beyond the domed surface 4 of the flange 3. The stem 7 extends longitudinally through the tubular shank 2, and has a radially enlarged head 8 whose outer diameter is substantially equal to the outer diameter of the tubular shank 2, in contact with the end of the shank 2 remote from the flange 3.

The sequence of figures 1 to 4 shows the use of a rivet to join together two sheets 9 and 10 of material such as sheet metal. The sheets 9 and 10 are first formed with respective bores 11 and 12, whose diameter is substantially equal to the external diameters of the head 8 of the stem 7 and of the tubular shank 2. The bores 11 and 12 are aligned, as seen in figure 1, and the head 8 and shank 2 of the rivet 1 are then inserted through the bores 11 and 12. The undersurface 5 of the flange 3 contacts the sheet 9 wherein the rivet 1 is fully inserted, and the peripheral surface 6 of the flange is inclined and faces towards the upper surface of the sheet 9 to form an undercut extending around the edge of the flange 3.

Once the rivet 1 has been fully inserted, downward pressure is exerted on the upper surface 4 of the flange 3, and a tensile force is applied to the protruding stem 7, to draw the head 8 of the stem towards the flange 3. As shown in figure 3, this causes the lower end of the tubular flange to which is unsupported by the bores 11 and 12 to buckle outwardly to form an enlarged region 13, preventing removal of the rivet from the aligned holes, and drawing the two sheets 9 and 10 into close contact.

- 5 -

When a predetermined tensile force is exceeded, the stem 7 breaks and the protruding part of the stem 7 is removed from the flange 3, as seen in figure 4. The stem 7 may break at a point spaced from the head 8, leaving the head 8 and a portion of the stem 7 within the shank 2, as seen in Figure 4.

5 Alternatively, if the stem is weakened so as to break at its junction with the head 8, the stem 7 may be entirely removed through the flange 3 and the head 8 may fall away from the end of the shank 2.

Figure 5 shows a first embodiment of the present invention. In order to
10 protect the exposed flange 3 of the rivet 1 from abrasion and corrosion, a cap 20 is provided. The cap 20 is generally disc-like in shape, with a substantially flat upper surface 21. The undersurface of the cap 20 is formed with a cavity 22, shaped so as closely to receive the flange 3 of the rivet 1. The cavity 22 has an undercut peripheral surface 23 angled to correspond with the
15 peripheral surface 6 of the flange 3 of the rivet 1.

The cap 20 is made from resilient material such as synthetic plastics material, and is resiliently deformable so that the cap 20 may be press-fitted onto the flange 3 of the rivet 1. A sealant material may be provided within the cavity 22
20 to be extruded therefrom as the cap 20 is fitted to the flange 3 in order to create a hermetic seal between the cap 20 and the flange 3. Sealant material may alternatively be applied to the flange of the rivet prior to fitting the cap.

The cap 20 shown in Figure 5 has a substantially cylindrical outer peripheral
25 wall 24. It is foreseen that the wall 24 may be tapered in the axial direction of the cap, so that the cap is substantially trunconical in form with the cavity 22 formed in the base of the truncated cone. Such an arrangement will minimise the likelihood of cables or the like snagging on the cap when used.

30 The resilient engagement between the undercut surface 23 of the cavity 22 and the undercut surface 6 of the flange 3 retains the cap 20 onto the flange

- 6 -

of the rivet. In order to take full advantage of this retention, a retaining or gripping structure may be integrally moulded with the cap 20 so that the rivet and cap may be used to retain a secondary component to the sheets 9 and 10 which the rivet secures together. Such a component is shown in sectional view in Figure 6, and in perspective in Figure 7.

Referring now to Figure 6, the cap 20 is formed with the cavity 22 to engage the flange 3 of the rivet 1, and on the upper surface 21 of the cap, a resilient clamp formation for receiving a cylindrical object such as a pipe is formed.

10 The clamp formation comprises a pair of cantilever arms 30 and 31 whose adjacent surfaces are shaped to form a part-cylindrical passage P. A pair of angled lead-in surfaces 32 and 33 are formed at the ends of the respective arms 30 and 31.

15 In use, the rivet 1 is first set to join together the two sheet components 9 and 10, and the cap 20 is snap-fitted to the flange 3 of the rivet 1. A cylindrical object such as a pipe is then placed on the lead-in surfaces 32 and 33 of the arms 30 and 31, and downward pressure on the pipe causes the arms 30 and 31 to flex apart due to the camming action of the lead-in surfaces on the surface of the pipe. The pipe can then pass into the passage P between the arms 30 and 31, to be retained therein by the resilient action of the arms.

Figure 8 shows an application for the rivet of the invention, wherein a plurality of rivets are aligned in the assembly and an elongate component, such as a decorative trim strip 40, is attached to the sheet metal assembly by means of an undercut groove 41. The groove 41 has a pair of undercut side surfaces 42 and 43 which engage the undercut surfaces 6 of the flanges 3 of the rivets. The trim strip 40 may be applied to the rivets by first engaging one of the side surfaces 42 with the surfaces 6 of the rivets 1, and then flexing the trim strip 40 so as to open the slot 41 to enable the flanges 3 to enter the slot. When the strip 40 is released, the surface 43 engages the surfaces 6 of the flanges

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of the rivets to retain the trim strip 40 in place. Alternatively the strip 40 may be aligned with the rivet flanges and slid into engagement in the longitudinal direction of the strip.

- 5 In an alternative embodiment (not shown) an elongate component such as a trim strip 40 may be provided with a number of individual cavities each corresponding in size and position to the flange 3 of a rivet in the main assembly to which the strip is to be attached. The strip is then attached by aligning the cavities with their respective rivets and push-fitting the strip at
10 each attachment location. The strip 40 is preferably a resilient plastics component, but could be a sheet metal channel section with inwardly-turned flanges at the open side of the channel to engage the undercut surfaces 6 of the flanges 3 of the rivets 1.
- 15 Figures 9 and 10 show a further embodiment of the invention, intended to provide a tamper-evident cap for the rivet 1. As seen in cross-section in Figure 9, the cap 20 has a thin frangible flange 50 extending radially outwardly from the peripheral surface 24 of the cap 20, substantially co-planar with the undersurface of the cap 20. The cap 20 is applied to the flange 3 of
20 the rivet 1 as described in relation to Figure 5, and the flange 50 is thus positioned in contact with the surface of the sheet material 9.

- The flange 50 may be a thin flange of plastics material moulded integrally with the cap 21, or may be a frangible material such as paper or metallic foil,
25 bonded to the underside of the cap 20. The flange 50 may be provided with a contact adhesive on its undersurface, to secure the flange 50 to the sheet material 9 when the cap is in place. The objective of the tamper-evident cap is that the structural weakness of the flange 50 will cause the flange 50 to be deformed or ruptured if any attempt is made to remove the cap 20 from the
30 flange 3 of the rivet 1. The tamper-evident cap may carry unique identifying indicia on either the flange 50 or the upper surface 21 of the cap. With the

tamper-evident cap shown in Figures 9 and 10, any attempt to remove the rivet 1, such as to substitute a component of the sheet metal fabrication for a replacement, will be detectable by the destruction of the flange 50 of the tamper-evident cap.

5

If the cap is removed and a new cap placed in its stead, the difference in the unique identifying numbers on the original cap and the replacement cap will clearly show that a substitution has been made.

- 10 Figures 11 and 12 show a further embodiment of the invention, wherein a cable tie structure is integrally moulded with the cap 20. The cable tie structure comprises a first flexible band 55 extending radially from one side of the cap 20 and having at its free end a head 56 with a through passage 57. Within the through-passage is a ratchet tooth 58. The cable tie assembly
- 15 further comprises a second flexible band portion 59 extending from a diametrically opposite side of the cap 20 to the band 55. The band portion 59 has a tapered inserting end 60, and a series of ratchet teeth 61 formed along one face of the band portion 59. The cable tie is positioned by first setting the rivet as described in relation to Figures 1 to 4 and then applying the cap as
- 20 described in relation to Figure 5. The flexible band portions 55 and 59 are then passed around a bundle of cables, and the insertion end 60 is passed through the passage 57 of the head 56 so that the ratchet teeth 61 of the band portion 59 sequentially engage the ratchet tooth 58 of the head 56 as the band is tightened. Engagement of the tooth 58 with one of the teeth 61
- 25 will prevent withdrawal of the band portion 59 from the passage 57, and retain the cables in a bundle.

- Figures 13 and 14 are sectional and perspective views, respectively, of a rivet wherein the stem 7 and head 8 are completely removed from the rivet during
- 30 the setting process, so that the tubular shank 2 of the rivet provides fluid communication between the two faces of the sheets 9 and 10 which the rivet

fixes together. To protect the flange 3 of the rivet, and to provide venting between the two faces of the sheet materials 9 and 10, a venting cap 60 is provided.

- 5 The venting cap 60 is similar in form to the cap 20 shown in Figure 5, but has a central recess in its upper surface 21 to accommodate a filter mesh 61, and has a central through hole 62 which provides fluid communication between the cavity 22 and the upper surface 21 of the cap 60.
- 10 In use, the rivet is set as described as above, but the stem 7 of the rivet is weakened adjacent the head 8 so that the stem and head are completely removed when the rivet is set, leaving the tubular shank 2 of the rivet unobstructed. The vent cap 60 is snap-engaged onto the undercut surfaces 6 of the flange 3 of the rivet, as previously described. When the cap is in
- 15 place, the through hole is aligned with the tubular shank 2 of the rivet 1, so that fluid communication is established between the upper and lower faces of the sheets 9 and 10 respectively.

- While the above embodiments of the invention include the provision of pipe
- 20 clamps, cables ties, tamper-proof flanges and vent openings, it is foreseen that any suitable structure may be formed integrally with the cap 20 in order to held in place by one or more of the rivets according to the invention.

- The rivet of the invention thus provides a convenient means by which
- 25 secondary components can be attached to a fabricated sheet metal structure, using the rivets which secure the structure together as attachment points for the secondary components.

- A second type of rivet according to the invention is shown in Figure 15. While
- 30 the undercut surfaces of the flange of each rivet are described and illustrated above as conical edge surfaces, in the rivet of Figure 15 the peripheral

surface 6 of the flange 3 of the rivet is formed with a rebate 61 adjacent the undersurface 5 of the flange 3, to form a radially outwardly extending flange region 3a spaced axially from the undersurface 5 of the flange 3 of the rivet to provide a clearance C between the radially-outwardly extending flange region 3a and the surface of a sheet to which the rivet is attached.

In a further alternative embodiment, illustrated in Figure 16, a conventional blind rivet having a flange 3 with a planar undersurface 5 and a cylindrical, i.e. non-undercut peripheral surface 6 may be modified by adding a spacing component 70 such as a washer to the shank of the rivet. The washer 70 is fitted over the shank 2 and contacts the undersurface 5 of the flange of the rivet. By making the outer diameter d of the washer less than the diameter D of the undersurface 5 of the flange 3, a peripheral region 5a of the undersurface of the flange forms an undercut surface when the rivet is set in a workpiece with the washer 70 in place between the flange 3 and the workpiece.

In a yet further embodiment of the rivet, illustrated in Figures 17 and 18, the flange 3 of the rivet has its peripheral region 36 dished so that the central region of the underside 5 of the rivet contacts a workpiece in which the rivet is set, and a peripheral region 5b of the undersurface of the flange is inclined away from the workpiece in the radially outward direction.

Figure 18 shows the rivet of Figure 17 set in aligned holes in two sheets 9 and 10 of material, securing the sheets together. In contrast to the rivets shown in Figures 1 to 14, the rivets of Figures 15 to 18 have a stem 7 with a conical head 18 tapering towards the stem 7. The head 8 of the rivet is received in a conical section of the tubular shank 2 of the rivet, so that in the unset condition (seen in Figures 15 to 17) the head 8 is within the end of the shank 2 remote from the flange 3. As the stem 7 is drawn upwardly (as seen in the Figures), the conical head 8 expands and deforms the tubular shank 2 of the

rivet. When the head 8 reaches a point where further movement up the shank is prevented, by the sheet material 10 preventing expansion of the shank, the stem 7 breaks and the head 8 is retained in position by the elasticity of the shank material. Stem 7 is removed through the flange 3.

5

Figure 18 shows a set rivet with a dished flange, to which a cap 80 has been fitted. The cap 80 comprises a disc-like top 81, a depending skirt 82, and a radially upwardly extending rib 83 formed on the skirt 82. The cap 80 is formed from resilient material, so as to be sufficiently flexible to enable the cap to be snap-engaged over the flange 3 of the rivet to the position of Figure 18, wherein the rib 83 engages the inclined undersurface 5b of the flange. In the embodiment shown, the undersurface 83a of the rib 83 is inclined to form a tapered lead-in surface, and the edge surface 6a of the flange is inclined so that when the cap 80 is first placed on the flange 3, the surfaces 83a and 6a engage to align the cap 80 and the flange 3. Pressure on the cap causes a cam action between the surfaces 6a and 83a, resiliently expanding the skirt 82 to enable the rib 83 to snap over the flange and then contract to the position shown in Figure 18 with the upper surface of the rib 83 engaging the undersurface 5b of the flange 3.

15
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The cap 80 may be formed with securing structures or tamper evident structures, as described in relation to Figures 6 to 13.

The rib 83 may be discontinuous, or may be a series of spaced rib portions extending on the interior surface of the skirt 82. Alternatively, the skirt 82 may be turned inwardly at its free end to provide an undercut surface to engage the undersurface 5a or 5b of the rivet flange.

25

Claims

1. A blind rivet assembly comprising:
a tubular shank;
5 a radially outwardly extending flange at one end of the shank;
a stem extending through the shank and having a head situated adjacent the end of the shank remote from the flange; and
the flange including an undercut surface facing towards the end of the shank remote from the flange.
- 10 2. A rivet assembly according to claim 1, wherein the stem extends through the shank, and the head is positioned outside the shank.
3. A rivet assembly according to claim 1, wherein the head is positioned
15 within a portion of the shank having an enlarged bore, at its end remote from the flange.
4. A blind rivet assembly according to any preceding claim, wherein the flange is circular in outline and the undercut surface is a conical edge surface
20 of the flange.
5. A blind rivet assembly according to any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the flange has a peripheral rebate at its edge adjacent the shank.
- 25 6. A blind rivet assembly according to claim 5, wherein the peripheral rebate is formed by a recess in the edge region of the flange.
7. A blind rivet assembly according to claim 5, wherein the peripheral rebate is formed by a spacer component positioned in contact with the
30 surface of the flange adjacent the shank, the spacer component having an outer diameter less than the diameter of the undersurface of the shank.

8. A blind rivet assembly according to claim 5, wherein the peripheral rebate is formed by a dished edge region of the flange.

9. A combination comprising a rivet according to any preceding claim
5 and a cap, wherein the cap is provided with a cavity for receiving the flange of a rivet assembly after setting, the cavity having an opening and an undercut surface surrounding the opening, the undercut surface of the cap being resiliently engageable with the undercut surface of the flange of the rivet assembly to retain the flange of the rivet assembly within the cavity.

10

10. A cap for use with a rivet according to any of claims 1 to 8, the cap being formed from resilient material and comprising a cavity for accommodating the flange, the cavity comprising an undercut surface engageable with the undercut the surface of the flange to retain the flange in
15 the cavity.

11. A cap according to claim 10, further comprising a securing formation for attaching a further component to the cap.

20 12. A cap according to claim 11, wherein the securing formation comprises a pair of spaced resilient cantilever arms with opposed enlargements adjacent their free ends.

13. A cap according to claim 11 or claim 12, wherein the securing
25 formation is a pipe clamp.

14. A cap according to claim 11, wherein the securing formation comprises a pair of flexible strap elements attached to the cap at one of their respective ends, the other ends of the strap elements being formed with
30 complementary parts of a securing device for attaching the strap elements together.

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15. A cap according to claim 11 or claim 14, wherein the securing formation is a cable tie.

16. A cap according to claim 10, further comprising a vent bore providing
5 fluid communication between the cavity and a surface of the cap opposite the opening.

17. A cap according to claim 16, further comprising a filter mesh in the
vent bore.

10

18. A method of attaching a second component to a fabrication comprising sheet material, comprising the steps of:

providing aligned holes in two portions of sheet material;

15 joining the sheet material portions by setting rivets in the aligned holes, the rivets comprising a tubular shank having a radially outwardly extending flange at one end and a stem extending through the shank from a head situated adjacent the end of the shank remote from the flange and the flange including an undercut surface facing towards the end of the shank remote from the flange;

20 providing a second component with a cavity for receiving the flange of a rivet assembly after setting, the cavity having an opening and an undercut surface surrounding the opening; and

25 resiliently engaging the undercut surface of the flange of the rivet assembly and the undercut surface of the cavity to retain the second component to the flange.

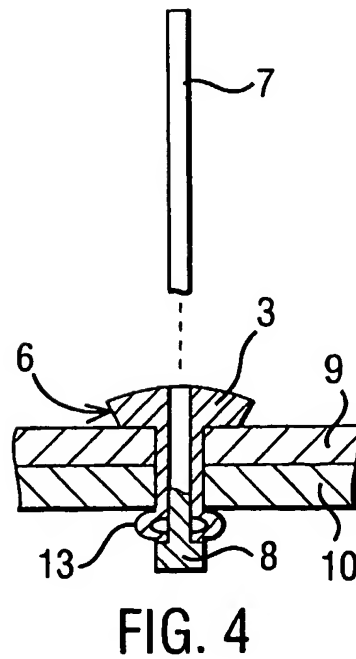
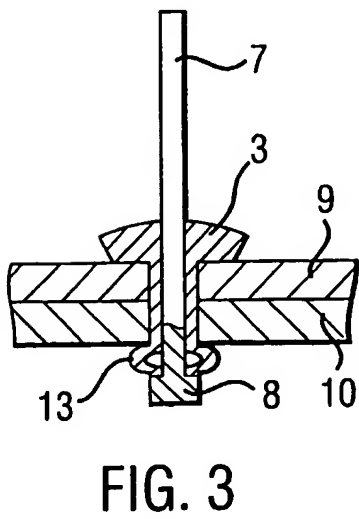
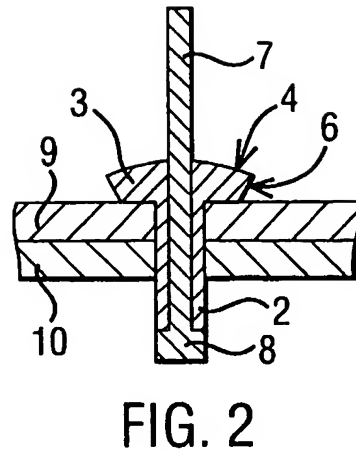
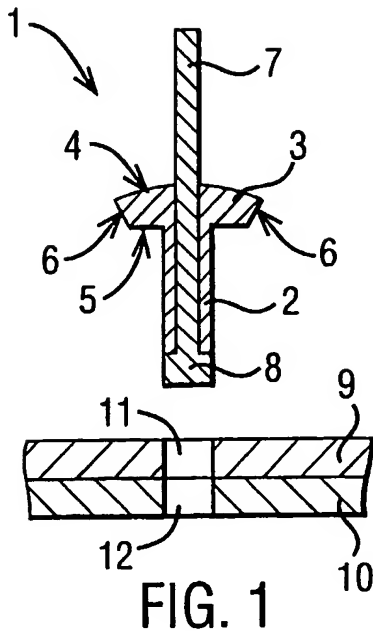
19. A blind rivet assembly substantially as described herein or with reference to Figures 1 to 4, Figure 5, Figures 6 and 7, Figure 8, Figures 9 and 10, Figures 11 and 12, Figures 13 and 14, Figure 15, Figure 16, Figures 17
30 and 18 of the accompanying drawings.

20. A cap for a blind rivet assembly substantially as described herein or with reference to Figure 5, Figures 6 and 7, Figure 8, Figures 9 and 10, Figures 11 and 12, Figures 13 and 14 or Figure 18 of the accompanying drawings.

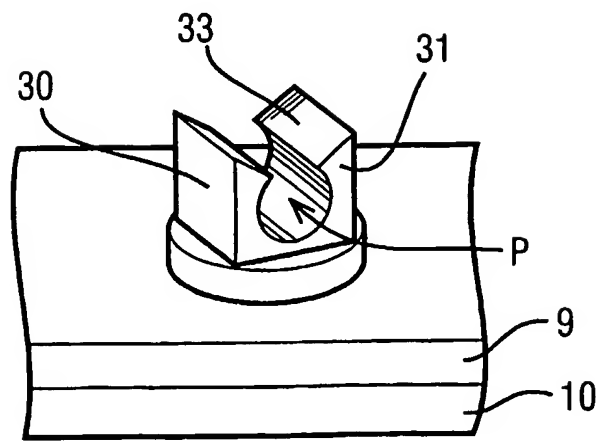
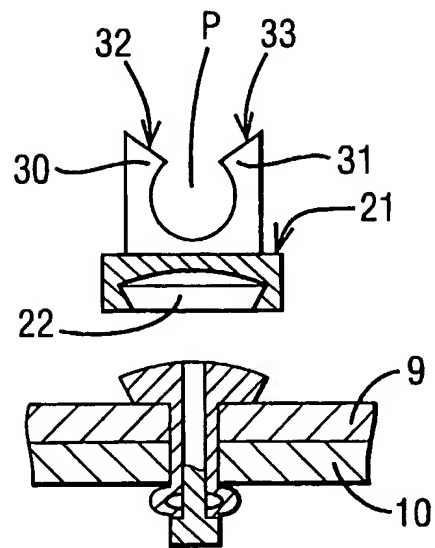
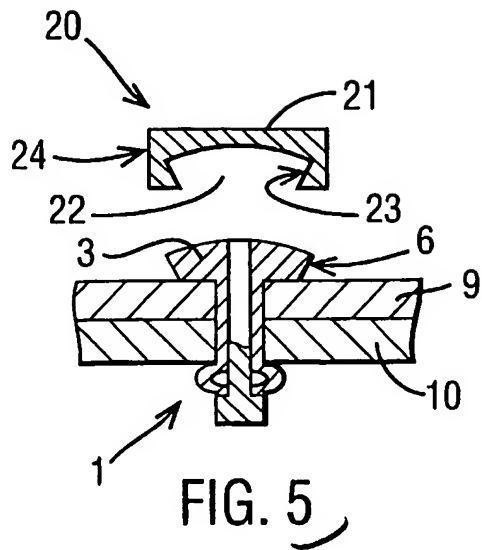
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21. A method of attaching a second component to a fabrication comprising sheet material substantially as described herein.

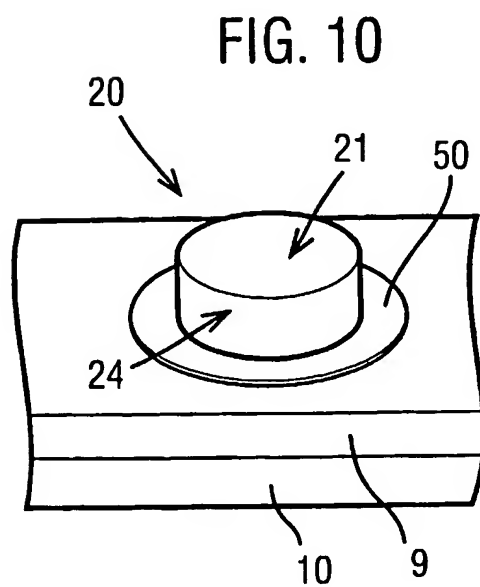
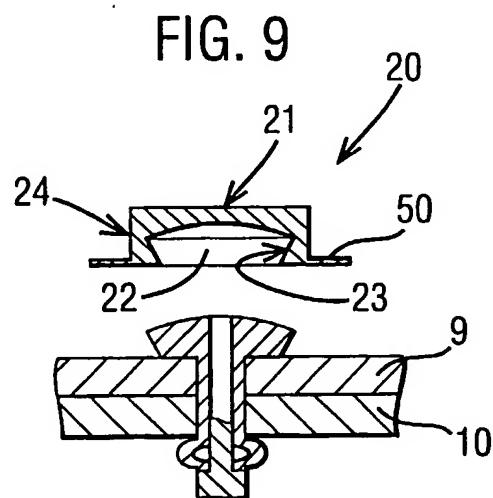
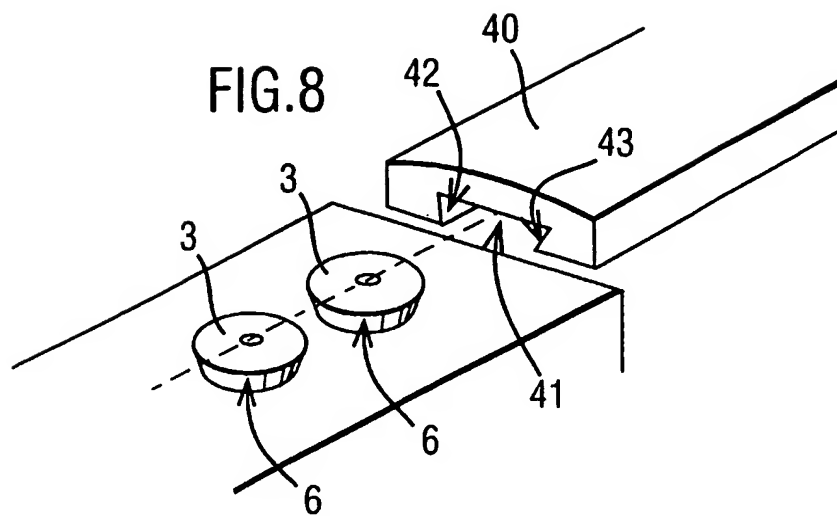
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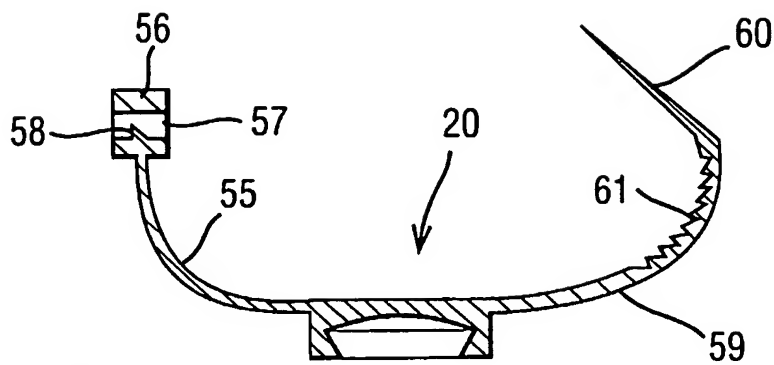


FIG. 11

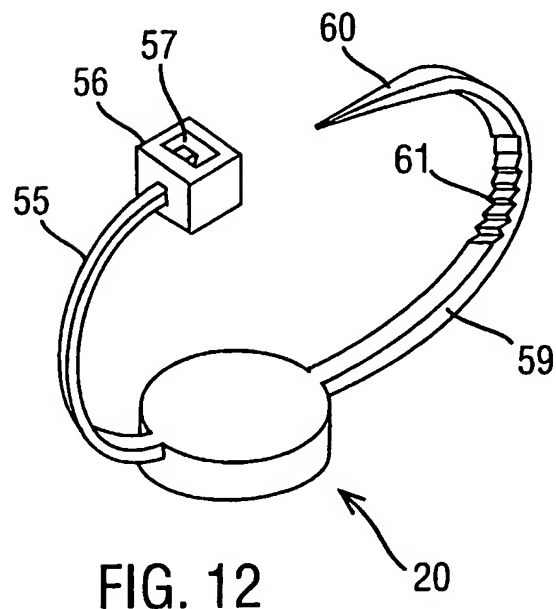
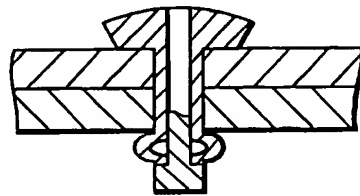


FIG. 12

FIG. 13

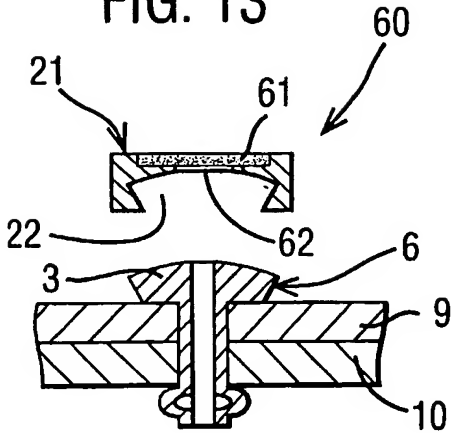


FIG. 14

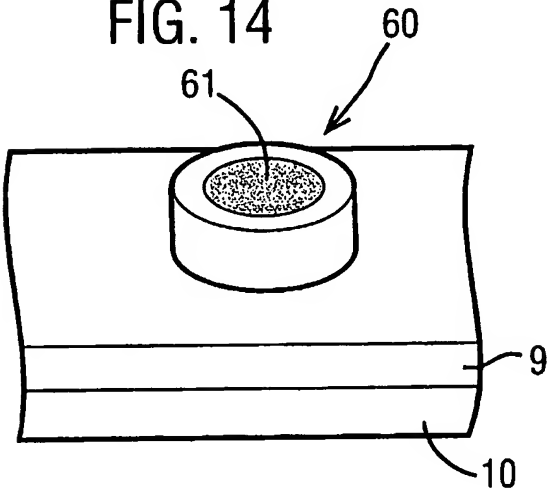


FIG.15

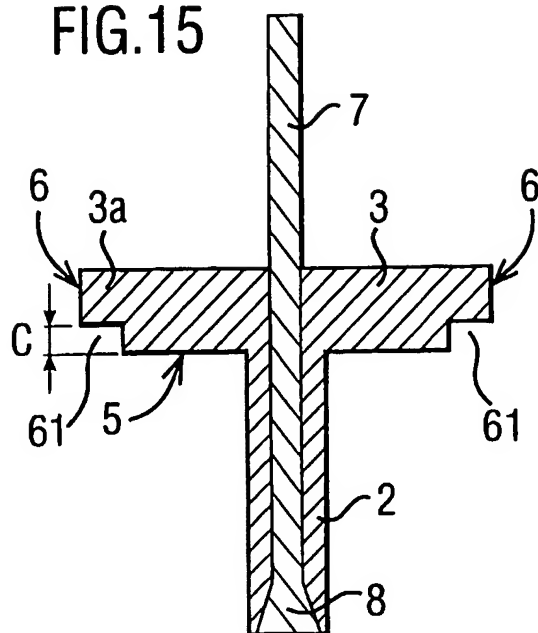


FIG.16

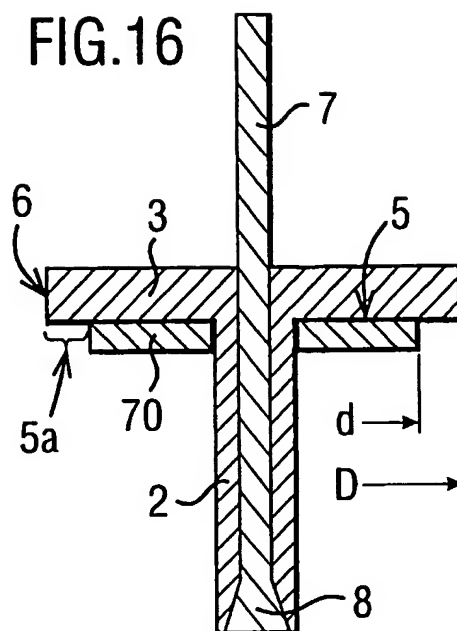


FIG.17

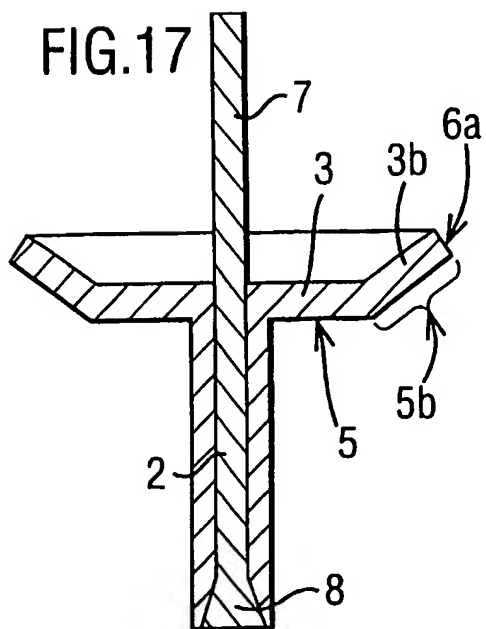
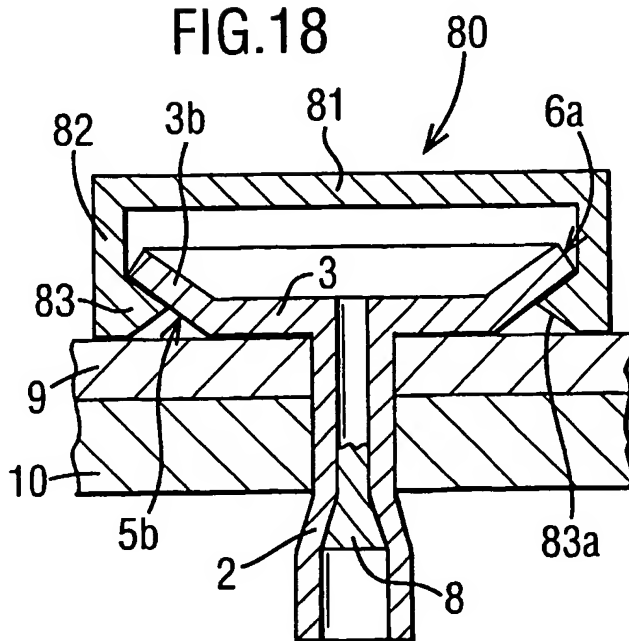


FIG.18



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/EP 02/09130

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC 7 F16B19/10 B21J15/04		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) IPC 7 F16B B21J F16G F16L		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
Electronic data base consulted during the International search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used) EPO-Internal, WPI Data		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 3 452 638 A (LAUER HERBERT) 1 July 1969 (1969-07-01) the whole document	1,2,4-6, 9,10,18
X	GB 1 462 409 A (MECANO SIMMONDS GMBH) 26 January 1977 (1977-01-26) page 2, line 78 -page 3, line 21; figures 4-6	1-3,9, 10,18
X	US 4 170 920 A (SIEBOL GEORGE) 16 October 1979 (1979-10-16) figures 6-8	1,2,4,5, 7
X	WO 97 25538 A (ALLFAST FASTENING SYSTEMS INC ;LUHM RALPH (US)) 17 July 1997 (1997-07-17) figures 1-5	1,3,4
-/-		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patent family members are listed in annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents : "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art. "&" document member of the same patent family		
Date of the actual completion of the international search 30 October 2002		Date of mailing of the international search report 12/11/2002
Name and mailing address of the ISA European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax. (+31-70) 340-3016		Authorized officer Ritter, F

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/EP 02/09130

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 4 904 133 A (WRIGHT JEWEL L) 27 February 1990 (1990-02-27) figures 1,2,7 ---	1,2,4
X	FR 1 302 907 A (BIERMANN HANS-GEORG; HEIDENWOLF HERMANN) 7 September 1962 (1962-09-07) figure 1 ---	1,5,8
X	GB 1 439 812 A (VYZK USTAV MECH) 16 June 1976 (1976-06-16) figures 1,3 ---	1,2,5,8
X	FR 1 390 540 A (OLYMPIC SCREW & RIVET- CORP) 26 February 1965 (1965-02-26) figure 2 ---	1,2,5,7
X	GB 1 552 235 A (UNITED CARR LTD) 12 September 1979 (1979-09-12) page 2, line 73 - line 88; figure 3 -----	10
A		18

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/EP 02/09130

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of Item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☒ Claims Nos.: 19-21
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
see FURTHER INFORMATION sheet PCT/ISA/210
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this International application, as follows:

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/SA/ 210

Continuation of Box I.2

Claims Nos.: 19-21

Present claims 19-21 contain due to their general reference to the drawings and the description so many options that a lack of clarity within the meaning of Article 6 PCT arises to such an extent as to render a meaningful search of the claims impossible. Consequently, the search has been carried out for those parts of the application which do appear to be clear, namely for the invention defined in claims 1 to 18.

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that claims, or parts of claims, relating to inventions in respect of which no international search report has been established need not be the subject of an international preliminary examination (Rule 66.1(e) PCT). The applicant is advised that the EPO policy when acting as an International Preliminary Examining Authority is normally not to carry out a preliminary examination on matter which has not been searched. This is the case irrespective of whether or not the claims are amended following receipt of the search report or during any Chapter II procedure.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/EP 02/09130

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Information on patent family members

International Application No

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